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ABSTRACT

The manual describes wellness as building a lifestyle based on a conscious commitment to accept responsibility for one's own health and for the way things turn out in one's life, and offers educators several inventory instruments for examining and changing their own lifestyle and the level of support for wellness in the school community. The manual notes that the school setting offers the opportunity to create and promote a culture in which healthful lifestyle practices are the norm and explains the six interrelated dimensions of wellness that can serve as a framework for including wellness in school programming: enjoying fitness; eating well; taking care of ourselves; enjoying life; relating to others; and being part of the world. The manual includes a Personal Lifestyle Assessment Inventory, on which educators can rank their level of achievement and satisfaction in the six wellness dimensions. The Individual Action Plan helps educators develop their own personal health plans by assessing areas that need improvement, stating a commitment to change, examining possible gains and support, and planning the first steps in the process. The School Culture Inventory allows the evaluation of the school's environment and suggests steps for improving it. (SB)

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Doing Part of the Work
Taking Care of Others
Serving to Others
Well
Living Life

Education Guide

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A School Program for a Healthier America

Educator's Guide

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What is wellness & why in a school?

"Wellness" is the building of a lifestyle based upon a *conscious* commitment to *accept responsibility* for our own health and the way things turn out in our life. It is a state of being which helps us to clarify values and purpose in our life and which enhances the quality of everything we do.

Wellness springs from a growing national awareness that what we do for our health is substantially more than what pills, doctors and hospitals can do. In short, we are beginning to realize that the things we do for ourselves and with each other in the areas of nutrition, exercise, stress management, and finding a sense of purpose and positive self-esteem are the vital elements for optimal well-being.

Unfortunately, many of us unconsciously live our lives amidst a culture of unhealthy lifestyle practices. In fact, we paradoxically *unlive* our lives this way and do so *in spite of the fact that we "know" better*. Without thinking, we often elect to eat foods with little nutritious value, and we overeat, overdrink, underexercise, overwork, ignore our environment, and pursue false avenues to relationships and self-worth simply because such a lifestyle has become more prevalent and convenient. It has become the "*norm*" or accepted and expected behavior in our culture to live this way. Norms frequently influence us without our awareness, and resisting them is often a very difficult task.

Schools traditionally have been concerned with the total education of the developing person. Health and physical education have long been a part of public education in varying degrees. The striving for a sound development in body, mind, and spirit within students is obvious. For many of us, however, we have only to look at ourselves and our culture to note that something has been missing.

What is the current state of our health? The truth is that the vast majority of our

health resources are concentrated on *curing* illness. This is so at a time when the major causes of illness are directly attributed to lifestyle rather than chronic disease—we are literally killing ourselves by the way we live. The Center for Disease Control, HEW, in Atlanta, reports that 53.2 percent of all the deaths for people between the ages of 1 and 65 are caused by individual lifestyles. Smoking habits, misuse of pharmaceutical as well as illegal drugs, stressful living, poor nutrition, sedentary behavior, and other factors breaking down our bodies can cause permanent damage and death, most often through heart attacks and cancer.

Some other statistics will help highlight this:

- There are an estimated nine million Americans who are alcoholics
- Approximately 90 percent of all lung cancer cases occur in people who smoke
- Of the 50,000 people who die in automobile accidents, it is estimated that 50 percent of them could be saved if they had been wearing seat belts
- The American diet indicates that people consume daily on the average of:
 - 100 percent more additive sugar than they should
 - 8 times as much cholesterol as they should
 - 4 times as much fat as they should
 - 20 times as much salt as they should
 - 40 times as much caffeine as they should

The most powerful statistic, however, is the cost of our poor health. In 1978, the cost of health care in the United States was placed at nearly \$200 billion dollars, a figure that is expected to rise by approximately 10 percent per year. Of this, less than 1 percent is devoted to prevention or the promotion of positive health practices. The treatment of *illness* has, in fact, become one of the major growth industries in the United States today, standing just behind the housing and food industries in total dollar expenditures.

Yes, something has been missing from

what we've been doing, despite our good intentions. One missing ingredient is the contradiction between our words and our actions. Institutions which serve white bread, white rice, sugared drinks, and sugared snacks and cereals are not promoting good nutrition regardless of what happens in health education. Physical activities which exclusively emphasize team sports do little if anything to promote awareness and motivation with regards to aerobic (cardio-respiratory) exercise. Similarly, programs which talk about mental health, yet provide stressful environments by over-scheduling kids' time and overcrowding classrooms, often promote less learning, less enjoyment, and higher rates of anxiety... the very opposite of what they were actually intended to do!

Perhaps the most important missing ingredient, however, is the *conscious choice* involved in creating one's lifestyle and in working with others to build an environment—a *new culture*—to support that lifestyle. We may have taught facts, provided activities, and attempted to foster awareness of the ingredients of a wholesome lifestyle. However, we have not taught *preventive* health through (1) settings in which healthful lifestyle practices are visibly the "norm" and (2) learning activities which promote the personal and interpersonal creation of such a lifestyle.

The school setting offers students, teachers, parents and administrators a unique opportunity to experience building such a culture. It affords the time and flexibility for them to come together, identify ways in which they would like to improve their lifestyle, and then work together to create in school the necessary kinds of support. Be it daily jogging or swimming, dieting, practicing relaxation techniques, exploring a more nutritious diet, or quitting smoking, support systems can be created at school, thereby changing the culture to nurture these new endeavors. And the skills gained in creating support systems at school can be carried home and continued there.

It's very difficult to enjoy life fully—or even to be fully alive—without making wellness a part of one's lifestyle. The degree to which we feel vibrant, enthusiastic, and deeply satisfied in our work and our relationships relates directly to the active steps we take day by day to become a healthier and fuller person in spirit, mind, and body.

And it's fun! It's fun, for example, to explore new, more nutritional foods and to prepare snacks which even feel healthier to eat. It feels good to find ways to reduce stress or to discover how effectively our body is working for us. And it's even fun to jog or develop some other program of regular exercise, especially when it becomes the norm in one's culture to do so.

Your students are at a point in their lives when they are becoming increasingly curious about who they are, what's happening with their bodies, and how they should relate to the world and others around them. Many are concerned about manipulation and control from adults and are seeking continually to make more and more decisions for themselves. The school can provide an opportunity for them to learn and experiment with the power and choice they have in improving the quality of their lives within a supportive environment.

In addition to the personal benefit to students, teachers, and parents who get involved in a wellness program, there are benefits to the school as a whole:

- a way to foster cooperation and harmony in the school
- a change process that can be applied to other school problems once it is learned for health
- an opportunity to make use of many excellent health promotion curriculum materials
- a process of building a strong rapport between community members and the school
- a way of involving parents in the school program
- lower absenteeism for both students and staff
- lower turnover rate for staff
- higher staff and student morale

No matter what your reason for getting your school involved in a Healthy America wellness effort, you can be assured there will be double benefits—for the individuals who will attain greater health and longevity and for the school organization which will become a higher quality environment for students, teachers, staff, parents, and members of the surrounding community.



A closer look at this strange sounding word

Wellness is a strange sounding word. (Isn't it interesting that "illness" is not strange sounding!) Most people haven't the slightest idea what it means. Some find it an awkward word to use and may even dislike it. If wellness is seen as a "fad," the term will undoubtedly be considered a commercialized cliché and be disagreeable in that sense.

The term wellness is far more than a simple cliché, however. At a time when health is mistakenly viewed as the absence of illness, wellness serves to awaken one's awareness to lifestyle norms and practices that contribute more to an illness culture than to a true state of fitness and health.

Actually, the strangeness of this word contributes dynamically to its purpose. Once it has taken hold, it becomes lodged in one's mind as a continuous reminder that we could be, and want to be, taking better care of ourselves. Very hard to shake loose, it's like an alarm clock in our brain which wakes us up and nags us whenever we forget or get lazy about actively caring for the quality of our life.

Wellness can be seen as consisting of six interrelated dimensions reflecting the devel-

opment of the whole person in mind and body. Within each dimension there exists a variety of topics, and the list here is by no means intended to be all-inclusive. These six dimensions can serve as the framework for the inclusion of wellness in school programming.

Enjoying fitness

- A. Cardio-vascular fitness
- B. Strength endurance and flexibility
- C. Monitoring body systems
- D. Relationship between physical fitness and emotions
- E. Role of physical fitness in prevention of diseases and disability
- F. Relationship to weight control and stress management
- G. Relationship to physical fitness and stress management

Eating well

- A. Good nutrition
- B. Weight control
- C. Understanding food labels
- D. Emotional aspects of eating
- E. Asking for alternatives
- F. Creative cooking

Taking care of ourselves

- A. Respecting & caring for our bodies
 - 1. substance abuse (smoking, drugs, alcohol)
 - 2. complexion problems
 - 3. noise trauma
 - 4. cleanliness
 - 5. dental health
 - 6. sexual changes
- B. Safety practices
- C. Knowing what to do when (first aid)
- D. Substitution of positive addictions

Enjoying life

- A. Having fun
- B. Stress management
- C. Emotional awareness and expression of feelings
- D. Handling problems
- E. Scheduling time (work, sleep, and relaxation)
- F. Self-actualization
- G. Aging & death

Relating to others

- A. Appreciating differences
- B. Cooperative decision-making
- C. Human sexuality
- D. Cooperation in balance with competition
- E. Communication & active listening skills
- F. Conflict resolution
- G. Global interdependence

Being part of the world

- A. Sensitivity to our natural environment
- B. Conservation and protection of natural resources
- C. Awareness of community
- D. Influence of peers, family, community, and media on our decisions
- E. Leadership development
- F. Aesthetic appreciation

What makes it work?

Unfortunately, changes attempted in individual health practices which neglect the surrounding culture(s) are often shortlived. Over and over again, we see people start new diets or exercise programs, attempt to quit smoking, etc., only to abandon such programs without having achieved their goals.

Why? Because the attempt to make lifestyle changes in the midst of a culture which daily spends millions of advertising dollars encouraging us to do otherwise can be extremely difficult. When we do try to stand up and be different, we are often faced with obstacles in our home, school, and work environments which thwart or even ridicule our efforts. Unfortunately, the pursuit of a truly healthful lifestyle will be very much an exercise in frustration as long as our attempts to take time for exercise or relaxation at home and work conflict with the values and expectations of those around us, or our choice to eat nutritionally and refrain from smoking and drinking is conspicuous in the employee cafeteria, public places, and parties.

Most likely, we won't be able to transform all of the environments around us into healthful places. We can, however, learn to deal with them more effectively and to find ways to maintain lifestyle practices important to us.

What makes wellness work? On both individual and organizational levels it requires, first of all an *awareness* of our present lifestyle practices and the norms of our cultures (home, work, school, camp, social circles, etc.). We must be able to understand where we presently are in order to determine where we would like to go with the integrity to get there.

Second, we must make a *choice*. We must choose freely to create a more healthful lifestyle in which the quality of our life becomes a priority.

And third, we must make the *commitment* to do it...not only to determine what individual changes we wish to make in our own life but to join with others in our immediate environments to create support for one another. As we examine our individual lifestyles, explore the norms around us, and identify the kinds of support which exist in our community (and there are instruments in this manual to assist with that), we will be ensuring the future of a wellness lifestyle.

The school educator

You, the school educator, are the key to making a wellness program work. Your personal commitment to a wellness lifestyle is essential to the program's success. Without this commitment, you will lack the motivation to work through the planning and implementation stages. Ultimately, your acceptance of the need for change in your own life, your choice to create the difference, and the example of your commitment to change will drive home to staff and students the value and pleasure inherent in wellness living.

This does not mean that you need to be a paragon of fitness, a health food "nut", or clearly directed in terms of the values and goals in your own life. It does mean, however,

that you are willing to make some changes in areas that need attention. What is important is that you:

- are willing to explore your own lifestyle, acknowledging areas which need improvement;
- choose to build a more fulfilling lifestyle;
- make the commitment to do so visibly.

In the following pages you will find a Personal Lifestyle Assessment Inventory and an Individual Action Plan designed to allow you to examine your lifestyle and, if you so choose, to consider a plan for change. These two instruments are also reprinted in the appendix for you to duplicate and use with your staff.



Personal Lifestyle Assessment Inventory

Instructions

The achievement of a wellness lifestyle is a dynamic, ongoing process. This inventory is designed to help you to think through your own wellness practices and to implement a program for improvement and change. In completing the inventory, it is important to remember that for most of us there is a great deal that we can do to improve our wellness lifestyle. Try to answer the questions as candidly as you can so that they can provide a sound basis for planning your own personal wellness program.

For each of the items you are asked to circle the number before the item that best indicates your current level of achievement. A "one" indicates a low level of achievement, and a "five" a high level. A checkmark in the OK column indicates that you are satisfied with your present level of achievement, while a checkmark in the "Needs Improvement" column suggests that there is more in this area that you would like to accomplish.

Level of Achievement

Low High

Level of Satisfaction

OK Needs Improvement

Dimension I Enjoying Fitness

- | | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Exercising rigorously no less than twenty minutes at least three times per week. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Exercising regularly in such a way as to keep my body flexible and my muscles in tone. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Choosing to walk or ride a bike rather than use motorized vehicles whenever possible. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Making physical activity (walking, bike riding, swimming, sports, hiking, physical labor, etc.) a regular part of my life. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. Monitoring my fitness level periodically by checking resting pulse and recovery pulse rates. | ☐ | ☐ |

Dimension II Eating Well

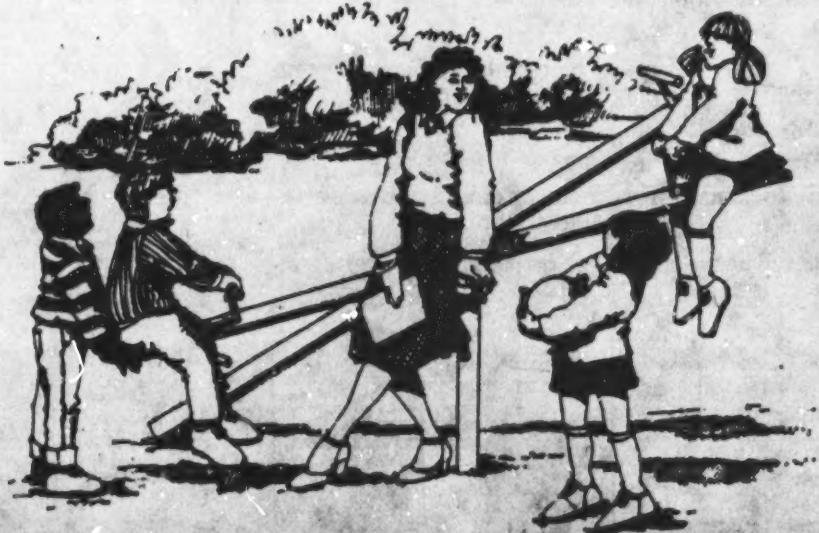
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|-----------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Enjoying nutritious food and maintaining a healthy appetite. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Keeping my weight within five pounds of the weight recommended for a person of my height, muscle condition and body size. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Consciously limiting the intake of salt, fat, caffeine, cholesterol, saccharin, red meats, refined foods, chemicals and sugar in my daily diet. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Consciously limiting the amount of "junk foods" included in my diet. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. Making sure that fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and nonprocessed foods form a significant portion of my daily diet. | ☐ | ☐ |

Dimension III Taking Care of Myself Smoking, Alcohol, and Drugs

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Not smoking or, if a present smoker, limiting myself to no more than four cigarettes per day. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Striving to drink no more than two alcoholic drinks in a single day and maintaining some alcohol-free days. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Not allowing alcohol or drugs to interfere with my enjoyment of life. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Not using drugs except with great caution and with medical supervision as appropriate. | ☐ | ☐ |

Medical Self-Care and Safety

- | | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Having a good knowledge of self-health care including breast self-examination for women. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Having a regular health screening or medical examination. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Having my blood pressure and cholesterol levels checked regularly and following my physician's recommendations regarding them. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Making effective use of medical and dental resources and following medical and dental recommendations that are made to me. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. Inquiring further when medical and dental recommendations are not clear or don't seem appropriate. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. Brushing and flossing my teeth and gums regularly. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. Following good safety practices and avoiding unnecessary risks. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 8. Not driving recklessly, over the speed limit or when I am under the influence of alcohol or drugs. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 9. Not driving with another person who drives recklessly, exceeds the speed limit or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 10. Wearing seatbelts or shoulder harnesses. | ☐ | ☐ |



Dimension IV Enjoying Life **Relaxation and Stress**

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Achieving a good balance between work, play, and relaxation. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Making successful use of a personally satisfying relaxation technique on a regular basis. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Being able to say "no" to demands on my time when saying "yes" would interfere with my health. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Being able to schedule activities in such a way that I don't end up overscheduled and harrassed. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. Being able to accept and constructively deal with my own feelings and the feelings of others. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. Being able to deal promptly and constructively with problems without allowing them to get in the way of my enjoyment of life. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. Feeling free to professional help with emotional problems when necessary. | ☐ | ☐ |

Self-realization

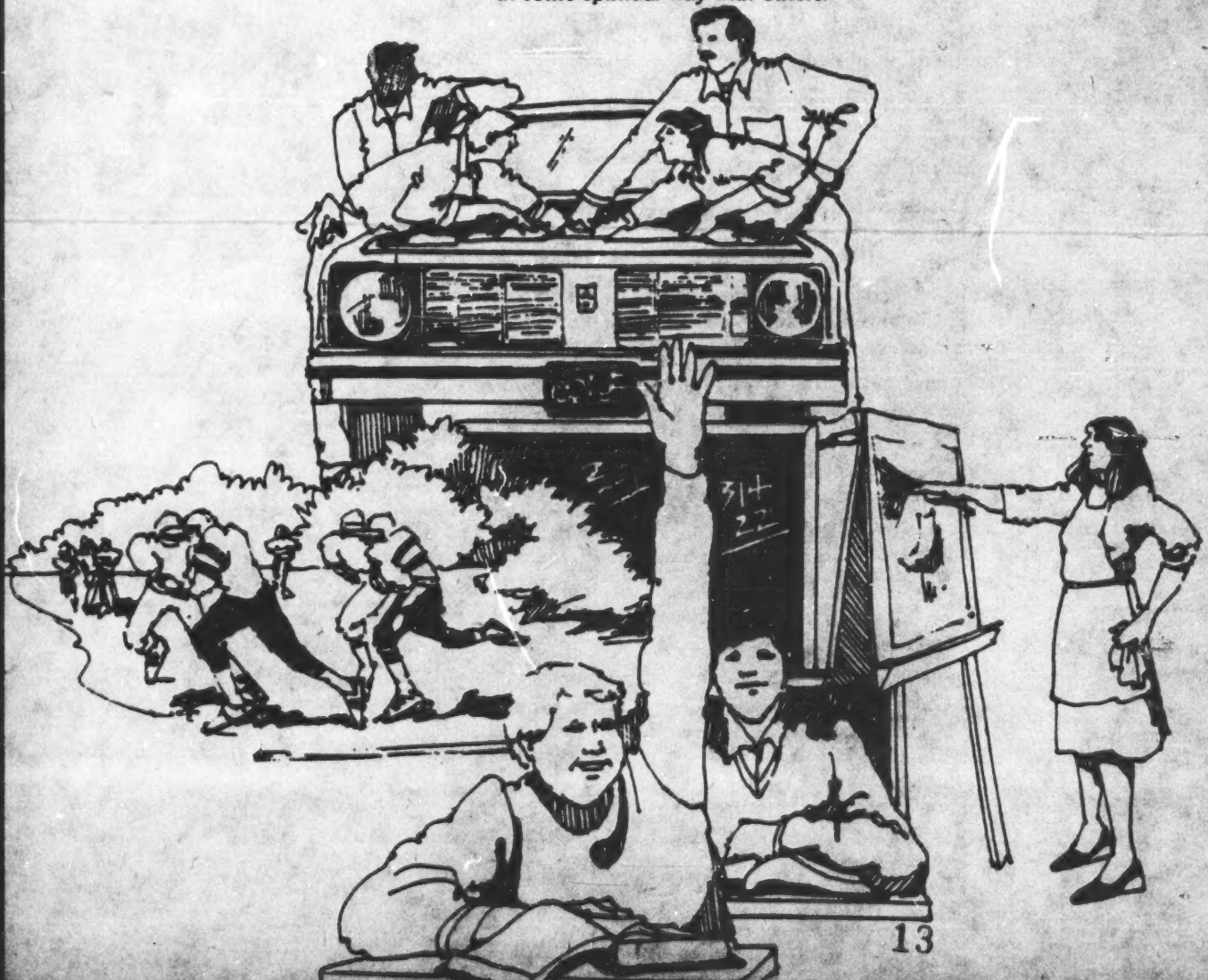
- | | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Feeling good about myself. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Feeling glad to be alive. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Enjoying work. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Enjoying family and/or friends. | ☐ | ☐ |

Dimension V Relating to Others

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Having a sincere, positive, caring relationship with at least one other person. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Being able to communicate effectively with others, especially those persons with whom I have most frequent contact. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Being able to trust myself and others enough to share my feelings in the context and at the time in which they occur. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Being able to deal in conflict situations in ways which insure the integrity of each person involved. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. Being able to conduct my personal and business affairs in ways which are non-manipulative and mutually satisfying. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. Allowing myself to love, thus cherishing and enjoying the happiness and welfare of others as I do my own. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. Being fulfilled in the nature of my relationships. | ☐ | ☐ |

Dimension VI Being Part of the World & At One With the Universe

- | | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Having a positive sense of community with at least one group of people with whom I am in close and frequent contact. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Making a positive contribution to the lives of those around me. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Making a positive contribution to the world through the quality and integrity of the work I do, my concern and efforts to improve the quality of life, and through the example I set as a human being. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Helping to preserve our environment by assisting with the conservation of resources on personal, business, and political levels. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. Meeting my needs for spiritual growth through a consideration of a personal belief system. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. Taking time regularly to renew and experience the spiritual aspects of my life and actively sharing myself in some spiritual way with others. | ☐ | ☐ |



Individual Action Plan

Almost all of us have a number of health practices which could stand improvement and in which improvement is possible. The Individual Action Plan, consisting of six parts, is designed to help people develop their own personal health plans. If you wish, you may share your plan with others; such sharing can often provide you with additional support.

I. A Checklist of Possible Areas for Improvement

Below are listed a number of areas that you have already considered in evaluating your health practices. Indicate the areas that you feel need improvement by placing check marks in the appropriate boxes. For those areas you have checked, indicate the priority

that you are giving to them on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being highest priority. In the third column summarize the improvements that you are seeking (for example, "to stop smoking" or "to lose 10 pounds in the next two months"; other possibilities appear on pages 11-12).

Area	Needs Improvement	Priority	Objectives
Enjoying Fitness:			
Aerobic exercise			
Stretching & muscle toning			
Eating Well:			
Nutrition			
Weight control			
Taking Care of Myself:			
Smoking			
Misuse of alcohol			
Drug abuse			
Health knowledge and use of medical resources			
Safety			
Enjoying Life:			
Stress control			
Relaxation			
Personal fulfillment			

Mental Health			
Life planning			
Relating to Others:			
Mutual, rewarding relationships			
Sharing feelings			
Handling conflict			
Caring for others			
Being Part of the World			
Making a contribution			
Environmental sensitivity			
Spiritual awareness			

Some possibilities for health improvement

A. Physical Fitness

1. Assure vigorous exercise suitable for a controlled cardiovascular development program for at least 20 minutes three times per week.
2. Assure regular exercise for stretching, flexibility, and muscle tone.

B. Nutrition

1. Maintain nutritionally well-balanced eating patterns, with fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and non-processed foods forming a significant portion of your diet.
2. Eat a well-balanced breakfast every day.
3. Limit use of sugar, salt, caffeine, cholesterol, saccharin, red meats, refined foods, and chemicals in your diet.

C. Weight Control

1. Be at or near your correct body weight.
2. Balance your intake of calories and your use of them with exercise.

D. Smoking

1. Do not smoke more than four cigarettes or equivalent per day, or quit altogether.

E. Drugs

1. Use only drugs specifically prescribed for you by your physician.

F. Health Knowledge and Use of Medical Resources

1. Awareness of current knowledge of health and health practices.
2. A medical examination or screening on a regular basis and follow-up on recommendations.
3. A dental examination or screening on a regular basis and follow-up on recommendations.
4. Control of blood pressure.

G. Safety

1. Drive safely within the speed limits and wear seat belts.
2. Be aware of safety in other aspects of your life.

H. Stress Control

1. Avoid overstress.
2. Practice stress reduction techniques as necessary.
3. Have proper balance between relaxation, recreation and work.
4. Get at least seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

I. Mental Health

1. Maintain a positive, healthy outlook on life.
2. Feel free to seek help with mental health problems when necessary.

J. Life Planning and Human Potential

1. Remove unnecessary blocks on the achievement of your full potential as a human being.
2. Plan for the successive stages of your life.

K. Human Relations

1. Develop and maintain mutually rewarding relationships with other people.
2. Enroll in some program or activity which fosters strong, positive relationships.

L. Environmental Sensitivity

1. Correct ways in which you waste resources at home and at work.
2. Recycle what you can.
3. Actively support environmental protection legislation.

M. Spiritual Awareness

1. Examine your own belief systems.
2. Share your belief system with others.
3. Provide regular opportunities to experience and renew the spiritual aspect of your life.

II. Level of Commitment to Change

As you consider your present motivation for bringing about a change in your health

practices, which of the following statements most accurately describes your present position?

- ☐ I am completely committed to making these changes and am prepared to do whatever is necessary to bring them about.
- ☐ I am committed to making these changes and am prepared to exert a reasonable amount of effort to bring them about.
- ☐ I am somewhat interested in making these changes, but I probably am not ready yet to give them a high priority in my life.
- ☐ I am not sure whether or not I would be interested in making changes.
- ☐ I definitely have no interest in making changes at this time.

III. Expected Level of Difficulty

As you consider the level of difficulty that you expect to encounter in achieving the change objectives you have set for yourself, which statement most closely reflects it?

- ☐ Very difficult
- ☐ Difficult
- ☐ Somewhat difficult
- ☐ Not too difficult (Easy)
- ☐ Not at all difficult (Very easy)

IV. Anticipated Gains and Potential Losses

List below what you expect to gain from being successful in achieving the objectives you have set for yourself.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

If you decide not to change or if you are not successful in bringing about change, list below the negative consequences that you expect might accrue as a result.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

V. Level of Support

What level of support do you expect from the various groups that you belong to in working towards your planned changes?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ A high level of support | ☐ Very little support |
| ☐ A moderate level of support | ☐ No support |

VI. Some First Steps That I Am Considering

Changes, no matter how great, always have to take place one step at a time. As a first step, you might want to list your concerns in an order of priority so that you might better organize your planning and work in that order. List your most important concern on line 1, with less important areas following.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

What specific first steps could you take within the next few days, weeks or months, to deal with the areas of concern that you have listed above?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

The school culture

As an educator, you are in a position to assess and modify a number of factors affecting wellness in your school or classroom. Looking at the culture of a school with respect to wellness, you would find the relative presence or absence of support for wellness practices in the following areas:

School Leadership — As with the superintendent, school principal, or headmaster, other school staff in leadership positions (assistants to the principal, department heads, teacher leaders) must believe in and practice a wellness lifestyle, not merely give lip service to it. Most decisions with regards to school policy, food service, and program/curriculum reflect in some fashion the degree to which the school leadership is committed to wellness, and thus such decisions can significantly influence the school culture.

Teaching Staff — Faculty members can be critical role models for their students who admire and often emulate the dedicated, enthusiastic, and caring teacher. What

better way to share healthful living?

Support Staff — Although their direct contact with students may be limited, administrative, custodial, food service, medical, and other support staffs comprise an important part of the school community and significantly affect the existing attitudes with regards to wellness. If the school is not unified in its approach to wellness, the resulting schisms could jeopardize the program. Thus, support staff should be involved in the planning and implementation of the wellness program.

School Cafeteria — The cafeteria is one of the most critical areas in the school, evidencing at once the school's commitment to wellness and providing an opportunity to motivate staff and students toward new experiences with food. The food service can set the stage with a powerful multi-sensory experience in nutritional eating, or conversely jeopardize the program by continuing to prepare and serve foods which, though traditional, may contradict the nutritional guidelines of a wellness program.



The School Program and Daily

Schedule—Again, if the opportunity for sufficient relaxation, personal time, and elimination of unnecessary stress are accepted as important lifestyle practices, then the school's program and schedule is an important index of the understanding of and commitment to this kind of lifestyle. If staff and students are constantly "on the go" with little time to do what they want to do either alone or with others, the school has obviously failed to achieve this aspect of wellness and will thus invalidate by example any "teaching" in this area.

The Home Environment—The home environment is important in ensuring that what is learned in school becomes a lifetime practice. Staff and students will need some guidance in creating supportive environments at home. Parental knowledge and

expectations regarding the wellness program strongly influence the attitudes of students.

The School's Wellness Resource

Center—The resource center (consisting of books, materials, and persons) can provide students, teachers and parents with information and ideas while generating continued curiosity and excitement.

On the following pages, you will find a school culture inventory similar to the one you've just completed for your own personal lifestyle. This inventory is also divided according to the six dimensions of wellness as diagramed on page 3 of this manual. Following the questionnaire portion of each dimension, you will find a list of suggested steps you might consider as you develop goals and objectives for that particular dimension of wellness.

The School Culture Inventory

Instructions

The development of a wellness culture in any community is a dynamic on-going process which offers many opportunities for improving interpersonal relations and creating an exciting community spirit. This inventory is designed to help you examine the degree to which wellness is a part of the culture in your school and to assist you in developing a program for improvement and change. In completing the inventory, it is important to remember that just as for most of us there is a great deal that we can do to improve our personal lifestyle, so also is there a great deal we can do to improve the cultures in which we live.

Please understand that this inventory is **NOT** designed with the purpose of measuring whether or not your school "passes or fails" in wellness. The items provided here are simply a variety of alternatives for you to consider in your own planning, and it is not expected that all items will be appropriate to all schools. Try to answer the questions as candidly as you can so that they can provide a sound basis for planning your school's wellness program.

For each of the items you are asked to circle the number before the item that best indicates your current level of achievement, beginning with the question, "How well is my school doing in..." A "1" indicates a low level of achievement, and a "5" a high level. The check mark in the "OK" column indicates that you are satisfied with your present level of achievement, while a check mark in the "Needs Improvement" column suggests that there is more in this area that you would like to accomplish.

Following the questions are a series of suggested ways to implement cultural changes supportive of that particular dimension of wellness.

Dimension I: Enjoying Fitness

A physical fitness-oriented culture at school involves much more than opportunities for physical exercise and play. Some of the additional goals relating to Dimension I include:

- To emphasize the value and pleasure of physical exercise as a lifelong health habit at an early age

Many adults would undoubtedly be in better health today had the emphasis on physical fitness been as pervasive during our youth as it is today. Unfortunately, it was not until cardio-vascular disease was acknowledged as the primary cause of death for persons under 65 that many of us awoke to the need for regular exercise

- To instill in students, teachers, staff and parents, an awareness of the difference between aerobic and non-aerobic exercise

Many sports do not provide sufficient and sustained cardio-respiratory exercise to adequately strengthen the heart and lungs. Because some team sports (e.g. football) are non-aerobic, it is not correct to imply that all "athletes" are necessarily physically fit

- To provide a cultural experience for students, teachers and parents in which physical exercise is valued, practiced, and enjoyed, enabling them to recreate that culture in their home environments
- To help students, teachers and parents understand the physiological effects of exercise on the body

Level of Achievement

Low High

Level of Satisfaction

Needs
Improvement
OK

How Well is My School Doing In...

1 2 3 4 5	1. actively, constructively, and consistently supporting students and staff by providing opportunities to engage in a regular, planned program of physical exercise?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	2. encouraging people to walk or ride bikes rather than use motorized vehicles when practical?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	3. encouraging all staff members to adopt a program of regular physical exercise?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	4. developing programs which underscore the importance of regular aerobic exercise and which explain the dynamics involved (e.g. pulse rate, blood pressure, respiratory capacity, circulation, cell nourishment)?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	5. teaching students and staff various stretching and flexibility exercises?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	6. providing films and other resources which explain the nature and importance of physical fitness?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	7. creating a climate in which regular exercise is valued and enjoyed?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	8. requiring all students to demonstrate competency in health and wellness?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	9. providing services for staff in the areas of health and wellness?	☐	☐

Some Ideas For Implementing Dimension I

- Provide aerobic conditioning programs as part of every physical education and athletic program
- At the classroom level do several minutes of stretching exercises at a regular and convenient time during the day
- Occasionally schedule a "fitness event" for the school community where the emphasis is on participation rather than competition
- Initiate a support group for people who wish to develop an individual exercise program or wish to exercise together (e.g. staff who regularly meet in the early morning to jog together)
- Provide yoga and aerobic dance as regular school activities
- Demonstrate to students how to measure pulse rates while exercising and explain the relationship of the pulse to physical fitness
- Explain the significance of blood pressure and its relationship to exercise and diet
- Discourage the use of motorized vehicles and encourage bicycling and walking as alternatives where feasible
- Provide time for individual staff members to pursue a regular exercise program

Dimension II: Eating Well

Good nutrition involves more than ensuring that the three meals eaten each day are balanced across the basic food groups. Of considerable importance, for instance,

are the ingredients in the foods we eat and the manner in which these foods are prepared. Listed below are some questions which will help you explore the nutrition-oriented culture at your school.

Level of Achievement

Low High

How Well is My School Doing In ...

Level of Satisfaction

Needs Improvement
OK

1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
					1. actively, constructively, and consistently supporting students and staff in their efforts to maintain nutritional eating patterns?	☐				☐
					2. limiting the amount of sugar, salt, saturated fat, chemical additives, preservatives, and refinement in foods prepared or otherwise offered at school?	☐				☐
					3. providing whole grain breads as an alternative to white bread and encouraging their use?	☐				☐
					4. providing honey as an alternative to sugar and encouraging its use (or refraining from the use of any additive sweetener)?	☐				☐
					5. discouraging the use of caffeine through coffee, tea, coke, etc.?	☐				☐
					6. using fresh fruits and vegetables rather than canned and providing fresh and uncooked fruits and vegetables daily?	☐				☐
					7. using whole wheat rather than white flour and pasta in baking recipes?	☐				☐
					8. using whole grain brown rice instead of enriched white rice in recipes?	☐				☐

1 2 3 4 5	9. limiting the amount of red meats served, substituting fish and poultry meats?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	10. carefully steaming cooked vegetables instead of boiling in order to retain maximum nutrient value?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	11. broiling meat and fish instead of frying?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	12. providing educational opportunities for staff campers in the areas of nutrition?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	13. providing assistance for food service personnel, including inservice training if necessary, in planning menus, purchasing foods, and preparing meals that are maximally nutritious?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	14. providing opportunities for students and staff to learn how to plan and prepare nutritious meals/snacks and to do so during activity periods, cookouts, and overnights?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	15. limiting or eliminating the amount of "junk" food (e.g. sugar candy, soda, popsicles) sold in the camp canteen?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	16. discouraging parents from sending lunches from home containing sweets and other "junk" foods?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	17. providing staff and students with films and other resources explaining the nature and importance of good nutrition?	☐	☐

Some Ideas For Implementing Dimension II

- Use the school domestic science center to teach students how to prepare nutritional foods and snacks (e.g. unsalted peanut butter, yogurt, sprouts, granola, molasses oatmeal cookies)
- Have an occasional meatless meal by providing alternative sources of protein.
- Provide films and other resources (including posters, whether commercial or camper-designed) explaining the nature and value of good nutrition.
- Occasionally schedule a special meal in the cafeteria where the emphasis is on appreciation of the foods served in different cultures
- Examine cafeteria food purchases and menu to determine the degree to which foods served include sugars, salt, saturated fat, chemical additives, preservatives, and
- Offer whole grain breads as alternatives to white bread; as far as possible, use only

whole wheat flour in baking.

- Provide non-caffeinated hot drinks as alternatives to coffee and tea.
- Serve fresh fruit and vegetables daily, uncooked when possible. Serve only canned fruits that have been packed in natural juice rather than a sugar syrup.
- Carefully steam rather than boil cooked vegetables.
- Use whole grain brown rice and whole wheat pasta rather than enriched white rice and pasta.
- Limit the amount of red meats served, frequently substituting fish and poultry meats or meatless protein alternatives.
- If a vegetarian diet is important to staff and students, provide a varied, substantial vegetarian alternative; permit non-vegetarians to explore these alternatives
- Support food service personnel in nutritional cooking efforts including, if necessary, inservice training in natural food preparation on an institutional level

- **Actively discourage parents from sending lunches which include "junk" foods; recommend healthful alternatives to parents, carefully explaining the rationale**

- Limit or eliminate "junk" foods in the cafeteria or canteen, providing instead healthful snacks and drinks (e.g. natural fruit juices, raisins, popcorn, non-sugared candies)

Dimension III: Taking Care of Ourselves

Obviously, proper fitness and nutrition are important ways of taking care of ourselves. Dimension III, however, relates specifically to bodily health care practices such

as the use of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol; medical and dental care; safety practices; risk-taking; etc. Listed below are some questions designed to assist you in determining the degree to which your school culture encourages and supports staff and students in this dimension of wellness.

Level of Achievement					How Well Is My School Doing In...	Level of Satisfaction	
Low	High					OK	Needs Improvement
1	2	3	4	5	1. actively, constructively, and consistently supporting students and staff in their efforts to take care of their physical health and well-being?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	2. discouraging smoking by staff members and limiting its practice to specific places (separate smoking and non-smoking lounges)	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	3. encouraging responsible use of medicinal drugs and alcohol and prohibiting the use of illegal drugs?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	4. requiring adequate medical examinations of staff and students?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	5. providing health care facilities and personnel capable of responding to health problems in the school setting while emphasizing programs of preventive medicine?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6. promoting safety awareness with frequent reviews of safety guidelines by teachers with students?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	7. prohibiting the taking of unnecessary, unsafe risks?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8. encouraging the use of seat belts in all vehicles?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	9. educating students and staff in basic first aid techniques?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	10. fostering an awareness among students and campers of the importance of personal cleanliness and health care?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	11. providing films and other resource materials related to self-care?	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	12. supporting the role of school health care staff in the promotion of health and wellness?	☐	☐

Some Ideas For Implementing Dimension III

- Provide specific cigarette smoking areas for students. Discourage cigarette smoking by students and, if necessary, provide specific

smoking areas for students

- Prohibit the use of illegal drugs at any time. Encourage responsible use of alcohol by staff during time away from school

- Provide experiential and valuing activities which underscore the dangers involved in cigarette smoking and use of alcohol and illegal drugs
- Require and follow through on medical examinations of staff and students
- Respond immediately and thoroughly to health problems
- Promote safety awareness by posted regulations and procedures in activity areas and by having staff periodically review safety guidelines with students
- Provide instruction in basic first aid and CPR techniques
- Require the use of seat belts in all school vehicles, and prohibit the taking of all unnecessary, unsafe risks
- Encourage the Health Center (a more positive term than "Infirmary" or "Nurse's Office") to act not only as the center for treatment of illness but also for the promotion of preventive health practices
- Obtain films and other resource materials related to self-care (e.g. a "smoking machine" and posters available from such agencies as the American Heart, Lung, and Cancer Associations demonstrating the harmful effects of cigarette smoking)
- Periodically examine your school for potential safety hazards and remedy as appropriate
- Develop support groups for staff interested in modifying behavior in areas of health care such as cigarette cessation

Dimension IV: Enjoying Life

Most everything we do is designed consciously or unconsciously to heighten our enjoyment of life. Our career, our friends, the places we live, our hobbies and leisure time interests, and our material possessions are all means to this end. Sometimes we miss the mark, however. Enjoying life is much more than busily filling our life with parties, trips, career pursuits, buying new things.... Too often we hear about people who seem to have "everything" (important job, prestige, money, family, beautiful home) yet commit some act of gradual self-destruction (e.g. alcoholism) or even sudden violence because something was missing for them and they lost hope of obtaining it. Less dramatic is the more common day-to-day "going through the motions" existence which becomes a dull, lifeless pattern of survival for many people.

Socrates said that "the unexamined life isn't worth living". Self-examination is important in enhancing the quality of our life. It is too easy to fall into a rut of work, striving, and busy routine while missing the real purpose in our life. The school setting provides an opportunity to explore ways in which work can be fun and in which stress can be experienced in a healthful and manageable way.



Perhaps the bottom line for enjoying life involves the ability to experience one's feelings and values and to share them with others when appropriate. By sharing with one another the ways in which we wish our days to be as full and as enjoyable as possible and

by discovering together the obstacles we place in our way, we can create the kind of supportive environment which helps students and staff to become more aware of their feelings and to be able to share them.

Level of Achievement

Level of Satisfaction

Low High

OK
Need Improvement

How Well Is My School Doing In ...

1 2 3 4 5	1. actively, constructively, and consistently supporting the attempt of students and staff to choose and schedule at camp an enjoyable lifestyle?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	2. helping students and staff examine their personal values and beliefs and act on them?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	3. eliminating unnecessary stress through overscheduling, inadequate organization, continuous pressure, crisis responses to problems, unnecessary rules, etc.?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	4. providing sufficient time for students and staff to "unplug" from the schedule?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	5. providing an opportunity for students and staff to learn and experience relaxation techniques and ways to manage stress effectively?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	6. providing an environment in which feelings can be experienced and shared in a responsible, supportive fashion?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	7. helping students and staff learn how to handle problems effectively?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	8. providing an opportunity for students and staff to examine the goals in their life and to reflect on whether or not their behavior reinforces their values and goals?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	9. providing an opportunity for students and staff to deal with issues of aging and death and how these can give meaning and purpose to life?	☐	☐

Some Ideas For Implementing Dimension IV

- Examine the school schedule to be certain students and staff are not "over-programmed." Be sure that sufficient time is provided daily for study and relaxation.
- Ensure that all school activities and programs stress above all the joyous aspect of living
- Examine the school setting for any source of unnecessary stress and remedy where appropriate
- Develop a support group with staff on stress management and relaxation techniques

- Expose students to various relaxation techniques and provide opportunities to practice such techniques during the day
- Include yoga as a school activity
- Initiate settings in which feelings can be explored and shared, and endeavor to create a climate in which the reasonable expression of one's feelings is continually supported
- Initiate discussions, role play situations, and respond to teachable moments with effective ways of viewing and handling problems
- Provide opportunities to explore the issues of aging, death, and one's goals in life

Dimension V: Relating to Others

A significant part of school life involves human relationships. Be they student to student, student to staff, or staff to staff, the dynamics of relationships at school are varied, at times complicated, and always multitudinous.

The school is an ideal place to encourage growth in interpersonal behavior. With the

pressures of school and work, the school needs to provide ample time and space for each person to examine the quality of his or her relationship to others as well as the contribution, both positive and negative, he or she is making to those relationships. With the right kind of sensitivity, support, and guidance, students and staff can open up to others in ways which will last and benefit them for a lifetime.

Level of Achievement

Low High

Level of Satisfaction Needs Improvement OK

How Well Is My School Doing In...

1 2 3 4 5	1. actively, constructively, and consistently supporting the development of strong, positive human relationships?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	2. helping students and staff to appreciate individual differences?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	3. facilitating cooperative decision-making on all levels?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	4. balancing competitive activities with cooperative ones (e.g. "New Games", group initiative exercises), emphasizing the importance of that balance, and defining healthy versus unhealthy competition?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	5. promoting, developing, and practicing good communication and active listening skills among staff and students?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	6. teaching and facilitating approaches to positive ("all-win") conflict resolution?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	7. assisting students and staff with concerns and questions they may have in the area of interpersonal relationships?	☐	☐

Some Ideas For Implementing Dimension V

- Build an appreciation for individual differences into the school schedule by providing for individual choice when possible and appropriate
- Recognize individual differences in school policy and program
- Involve staff in appropriate areas of cooperative decision-making.
- In appropriate courses, explore dynamics

of relationships and ways to develop high quality friendships

- Facilitate cooperative/decision making among students where possible (e.g. planning activities, developing rules)
- Develop a series of non-competitive "new games" or group problem solving activities
- Develop support groups for staff in communication and listening skills, in positive conflict resolution, and in interpersonal relationships

Dimension VI: Being Part of the World

This dimension of wellness involves three ways of experiencing life beyond the self:

- our sense of community locally where we live, go to school, and work and globally with all humanity
- our sensitivity to and concern for our natural environment

"Being Part of the World" involves the recognition that we must approach life from a field of "you and me" rather than "you or me" in our personal, social, business, and political lives. It also involves the recognition of the miraculous inter-relationship of all life forms revealed whenever we take the time to see, hear, smell, and touch the beauty of creation around us.

Our society has unfortunately become oriented towards a life of individual and collective "me-ness". More concerned with accumulating power and wealth and satisfying our present needs, we have ravaged the earth of a disproportionate amount of its resources while

simultaneously destroying a large part of its wildlife. Oil, steel, chemicals, and our obsession with accumulating material goods have become more important to some of us than an equal expenditure of time, energy, and creativity in discovering ways to live in harmony with and in appreciation of Nature. Leisure time activities more often involve being entertained by the television than taking quiet walks or otherwise experiencing our natural surroundings. Our orientation towards the present and immediate pleasures and our growing dependency on technological progress and material possessions have served to erode a sense of community, a respect and appreciation for the environment, and the spiritual basis of life.

School can be an opportunity to learn about community and about ways to work together to create healthful lifestyles. It can be a chance to understand our relationship to all life forms and to realize that each of us can make a difference.

Level of Achievement

Low High

Level of Satisfaction

Needs
Improvement
OK

How Well Is My School Doing In...

1 2 3 4 5	1. actively, constructively, and consistently, supporting the awareness, sensitivity, and efforts of students and staff to develop a feeling of community (both locally and globally) and respect for the natural environment?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	2. creating and implementing school policy from the frame of reference of the school as a community?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	3. helping to preserve and protect the environment by practicing and teaching about the conservation of natural resources?	☐	☐
1 2 3 4 5	4. providing opportunities for students and staff to experience natural, outdoor environments as part of the educational experience (e.g. environmental education experiences at a school setting)	☐	☐

Some Ideas For Implementing Dimension VI

- Have weekly or bi-monthly community meetings with staff to discuss problems, share concerns, and relate information
- If possible have community meetings with students for the same purpose
- Examine the school for areas of environmental waste and remedy these situations. Consider frequency of use of school vehicles, use of water and electricity, care of grounds, etc.
- Encourage staff and students to adopt and follow through on some environmental protection project
- Provide activities for students to experience ment, to appreciate the beauty and harmony in Nature, and to recognize the need for protection of the natural environment.
- Discuss the personal and political processes of conservation and the steps individuals can take to help

